

[Incidents of the Early '80s]

Frances [?] Tilly [?] wds 1285 July [?]

JUL 27 1938

Incidents of the Early '80's as told by W[?]. Weatherby

Maurice Ceates

Many of the things I am telling you are not first hand experience but were told to me by older settlers and I have saved notes and can be able to tell you as they were told to me I have intended for years to write these out, but have not ever taken the time, and I also have data that I have saved about the district that will help verify my stories.

After the raids and degregation of Victorio everything was quiet for several years then to the horror of the country, in May 1885, Geronimo was heard of in the country. Captain Cook , foreman for the W.S.Ranch , first saw them rounding up a herd of horses on the ranch. On the eighteenth of May word was brought in that Nat Luse and Cal. Orwig had been killed I, Maurice Ceates was the foreman at the Cooney mine the owner, Jo.E. Sheridan called me, and we organized a rescue party. We went out after the bodies and as we came to where the vicinity of the bodies were known to be we [?] came up on a detachment of soldiers camped by the river we asked them about the Indians and they didn't know anything about them and didn't seem to care if they carried off the country, the soldiers sure didn't do us any good. When we got to the place that the [?] mutilated bodies of the two men were we were all so aroused that I think we wanted ot go back and whip the soldiers for the bodies had laid out in the sun until, they were pitiful. The soldiers had loitered by the side of the river and they the bodies of two men were less than a mile of them and they would not go out and bring them into town, or camp either. We took the bodies into Alma for burial. On May the 22 we found the body of Lyons, an Englishman,

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badly mutilated and decomposed, this body was buried on the W.S. Ranch and the grave can still be seen from the highway, also the graves of two of the W.S. Ranch foreman killed by the Indians.

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The Apaches soon stopped their raids for a few months and weren't seen n any more of until October when they were heard of in the Cliff country, some soldiers were sent under Overton, from Port Bayard, to stop the driving off of the cattle and horses, and as always before there wasn't anything done but loafing. Overton said it was only the word of children and old women that the cattle were being driven off and would not move from camp. Clark, an old timer, cussed out Overton and A?S?Goodell, living in Silver City now, and the following deceased Mike Fleming, William Bates, Arthur and Billie Clark, Jesse Dickinsen, and an Englishman, followed the Indians to the red Rock district, but got there to late as they had already killed Dutch John, on Blue Creek.

The stage coach traveled by night as it was unsafe to go by day, and as the Apaches were superstitious about fighting at night it was fairly safe to make the run after sundown. A Mr Lauderbaugh carried the mail and drove the stage, on one run he lost the mail pouch which he missed when he got to Pleasanton at 1A.M., he had with him a Sheeshone Indian whom the Mormons had raised called Indian Jack. He was told he would be well paid if he would return for the pouch, he hesitated, and pointed to the Magellens and said "they'll fix me if they catch me; if I get one of them, God how I will roast him. I'll go." At the break of day he returned with the lost pouch, when asked if he stayed with the road he replied "only one way, but coming back I took the ridges and all of the short cuts that I knew or could find."

The women of the district were all as brave as the men they took the Indians as something to be expected. There was one woman that was a woman from the mountain country that met the sage stage and said to Al Lauderbaugh on one morning "[Al?], I reckon that you are going into town". and handed him a ten dollar bill. She told him to buy he her three

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little children a hat a piece. The Indian signs and postoffices were all around, but Mrs Bush didn't [seem?] to be the least worried, her husband was up in the hill hunting the cattle.

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Mr Lauderbaugh was fired upon his return trip with the hats, but luckily he escaped uninjured. The Indians fired upon him at Little Dry and all the way across the mesa, he for many years wore as a watch charm a bullet he took out of the stage after the fight was ever.

It wasn't uncommon then to hear each day of some one being killed [?] their cattle driven off . . . , and their cabin burned, but the end came with the [?] killing at Soldier Hill, about one mile south of the Old Meadow Ranch on Big Dry. J. McKinney was serving as guide for Lt. Cabel told how they were ambushed there. When they were crossin crossing Catons Plato, so called from the many catons, they found the bodies, being Clark and Kinney. These men had been hauling ore concentrates. The men were killed and their ore sacks ripped open and the contents scattered all over the ground. They followed the Indians on and at the eight miles from the [?] of Megellan Creek where two men named Lillian and Pryer had started a ranch they found their bodies and also the Indians which they fired upon, killing nine of the Apache. The soldiers were low on supplies and decided to return to Alma for supplies.

While at Alma a courier came through with a message and we started on going south with ten additional Navajo scouts and camped at the Siggins ranch the first night out. The next morning when start starting out met a Navajo, was in sight. The courier went on back to Fort Bayard and the men started around Soldier Hill the men singing "Good-by My Lover Good-by" when we were fired upon. My horse was killed. Dr [?] was killed and several others, and several injured. Every since this kill has been called Soldiers Hill. The Navajo scouts apperred seen after the fight was over. This fight seemed to be all the Indian were waiting for to return to the San Carlos reservation.

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They returned to the reservation to be fed by the people and rest after causing the settlers so much trouble.